

Testimony Submitted by – Elaine Burns, President, CT Brain Injury Support Network

H.B. No. 6550AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAID PROVIDER AUDITS.

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Slossberg, Representative McGee and members of the Human Services Committee: My name is Elaine Burns and I am the mother of a brain injury survivor, Ryan Cornell, who has been on the Medicaid Acquired Brain Injury Waiver for almost 18 years. I am also the President of CT Brain Injury Support Network, former President of the Board of BIAC and a member of the ABI Waiver Legislative Advisory Committee.

I support Bill No. 6500 to ensure that audits of providers are done in “in a fair and reasonable manner”. The lack of clarity regarding regulations caused tremendous hardship on agencies in recent audits. How can Agencies be held accountable when they were never given the regulations that were used when auditing them?

As an example, DSS proposed changes to the Regulations on March 26, 2013, on October 4, 2013, Commissioner Bremby responded in writing to public comments stating “there are provisions of the proposed regulation that are still being developed. However, once the Department has had an opportunity to specify such details, providers will be notified and given a reasonable amount of time to comply with these requirements”

This has never occurred, the changes are in place and providers are expected to comply, but DSS has never provided any completed development, notified providers of such developments, or given them time to make changes to comply. As of April 1, 2015, the changes will have been in place for two years and will be in full effect even though legislators have never passed them. Does this mean that in the future, providers will again expected to have knowledge of regulations that were never fully developed, desclosed and sent to them so they will be penalized again?

Brain Injury Survivors depend on these agencies to provide services that they cannot live in the community without. Having agencies spend endless dollars and time on audits they don't have clear guidelines for is unreasonable and will cause a deterioration of services as monies that would have been spent on enhanced client services will need to be directed towards Attorneys and other costs associated with the audits.

This is really about transparency, I know many of the people running ABI Waiver programs, they are dedicated and caring, it is important that they be allowed to do their jobs in the best way possible to make my sons life and other survivors lives, the best they can be.

Thank you for your time and support of this Bill.

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